

**Objection 1.** It would seem that divination is not a species of superstition. The same thing cannot be a species of diverse genera. Now divination is apparently a species of curiosity, according to Augustine (*De Vera Relig.* xxxviii)\*. Therefore it is not, seemingly, a species of superstition.

**Objection 2.** Further, just as religion is due worship, so is superstition undue worship. But divination does not seem to pertain to undue worship. Therefore it does not pertain to superstition.

**Objection 3.** Further, superstition is opposed to religion. But in true religion nothing is to be found corresponding as a contrary to divination. Therefore divination is not a species of superstition.

**On the contrary,** Origen says in his *Peri Archon*<sup>†</sup>: “There is an operation of the demons in the administering of foreknowledge, comprised, seemingly, under the head of certain arts exercised by those who have enslaved themselves to the demons, by means of lots, omens, or the observance of shadows. I doubt not that all these things are done by the operation of the demons.” Now, according to Augustine (*De Doctr. Christ.* ii, 20,23), “whatever results from fellowship between demons and men is superstitious.” Therefore divination is a species of superstition.

**I answer that,** As stated above (a. 1; Qq. 92,94), superstition denotes undue divine worship. Now a thing pertains to the worship of God in two ways: in one way, it is something offered to God; as a sacrifice, an oblation, or something of the kind: in another way, it is something divine that is assumed, as stated above with regard to an oath (q. 89, a. 4, ad 2). Wherefore superstition includes not only idolatrous sacrifices offered to demons, but also recourse to the help of the demons for the purpose of doing or knowing something. But

all divination results from the demons’ operation, either because the demons are expressly invoked that the future may be made known, or because the demons thrust themselves into futile searchings of the future, in order to entangle men’s minds with vain conceits. Of this kind of vanity it is written (Ps. 39:5): “Who hath not regard to vanities and lying follies.” Now it is vain to seek knowledge of the future, when one tries to get it from a source whence it cannot be foreknown. Therefore it is manifest that divination is a species of superstition.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Divination is a kind of curiosity with regard to the end in view, which is foreknowledge of the future; but it is a kind of superstition as regards the mode of operation.

**Reply to Objection 2.** This kind of divination pertains to the worship of the demons, inasmuch as one enters into a compact, tacit or express with the demons.

**Reply to Objection 3.** In the New Law man’s mind is restrained from solicitude about temporal things: wherefore the New Law contains no institution for the foreknowledge of future events in temporal matters. On the other hand in the Old Law, which contained earthly promises, there were consultations about the future in connection with religious matters. Hence where it is written (Is. 8:19): “And when they shall say to you: Seek of pythons and of diviners, who mutter in their enchantments,” it is added by way of answer: “Should not the people seek of their God, a vision for the living and the dead?”<sup>‡</sup>

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\* Cf. *De Doctr. Christ.* ii, 23,24; *De Divin. Daem.* 3

<sup>†</sup> The quotation is from his sixteenth homily on the Book of Numbers

<sup>‡</sup> Vulg.: ‘seek of their God, for the living of the dead?’